

Message Text

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11

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-11 AEC-11 DRC-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 /159 W

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R 221018Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9334

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 12382

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE; VIENNA FOR USDEL MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, MCAP

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SUBJECT: GISCARD'S ATTITUDES TOWARD DEFENSE ISSUES

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: WHILE GISCARD GENERALLY HAS SAID THAT HE WILL CONTINUE THE BASIC DEFENSE POLICY OF HIS GAULLIST PREDECESSORS, HE HAS HINTED AT ONE POSSIBLE AREA OF CHANGE -- ARMS CONTROL. OVER THE PAST DECADE, OF COURSE, THE GAULLISTS HAVE MAINTAINED A CONSISTENTLY NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD MOST ARMS CONTROL EFFORTS, PARTICULARLY CCD AND MBFR. WHETHER GISCARD'S HINT ON THIS SCORE WILL BE DEVELOPED INTO A SUBSTANTIVE INITIATIVE REMAINS TO BE SEEN. END SUMMARY.

2. US TROOPS IN EUROPE: GISCARD HAS SAID THAT HE AGREES WITH PRESIDENT POMPIDOU'S STATEMENT OF LAST SEPTEMBER: THE PRESENCE OF US TROOPS IN EUROPE IS NECESSARY TO THE SECURITY OF EUROPE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. WE DO NOT DETECT ANY INCLINATION ON PART OF GISCARD TO ACCEPT FRENCH ROLE IN FINANCIAL BURDENSARING.

3. NATO: WE EXPECT NO MAJOR CHANGE BY GISCARD IN FRANCE'S POLICY AGAINST PARTICIPATION IN NATO'S INTEGRATED MILITARY ORGANIZATION, ALTHOUGH GISCARD MIGHT BE MORE ATTRACTED THAN HIS PREDECESSOR TO SOME FORM OF FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN THE EUROGROUP IF THIS HELD OUT THE CHANCE OF RETURNING SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC GAIN TO FRANCE AND IF OTHER AVENUES TOWARD INCREASED EUROPEAN ARMAMENT COOPERATION SEEMED BLOCKED.

4. BILATERAL MILITARY COOPERATION: AS IN OTHER ASPECTS OF HIS POLICIES, GISCARD'S MORE PRAGMATIC INCLINATION WILL FAVOR FURTHER PROGRESS IN AREAS OF BILATERAL (AS OPPOSED TO INTEGRATED) MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE US AND WITH NATO. AS NOTED IN PARA 3 ABOVE, THIS WILL NOT LEAD TO FRANCE'S REINTEGRATION INTO NATO'S MILITARY STRUCTURE, BUT IT SHOULD PERMIT CONTINUED PROGRESS TOWARD OFFSETTING SOME OF THE MILITARY LIABILITIES THAT HAVE BEEN CREATED BY GAULLIST PURSUIT OF FRENCH "INDEPENDENCE" IN MILITARY AFFAIRS. THIS WOULD PROBABLY BE A GRADUAL, EVOLUTIONARY PROGRESSION, ACCOMPANIED BY A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF LIP SERVICE TO GAULLIST IDEOLOGY. NONETHELESS, GISCARD'S PRESIDENCY SHOULD FAVOR, PERHAPS

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EVENTUALLY ACCELERATE, CLOSER MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN FRANCE AND ITS NATO ALLIES.

5. FRANCE'S NUCLEAR FORCES: GISCARD HAS SAID THAT HE WILL CONTINUE FRANCE'S DEVELOPMENT OF ITS NUCLEAR FORCES, INCLUDING NUCLEAR TESTING. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE EXPECT THAT HE WILL MOVE AHEAD WITH FRANCE'S NUCLEAR TESTS SCHEDULED FOR THIS SUMMER IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC.

6. DEFENSE SPENDING: GISCARD HAS PLEDGED TO MAINTAIN FRANCE'S CURRENT PLANS FOR DEFENSE SPENDING.

7. EUROPEAN DEFENSE: GISCARD'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS SHOW A CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A EUROPEAN DEFENSE STRUCTURE, ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZES THAT THIS MUST FOLLOW, NOT PRECEDE, EUROPEAN POLITICAL UNION.

8. ANGLO-FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCE: GISCARD HAS NOTED THAT, INSOFAR AS EUROPE EVENTUALLY ORGANIZES ITS OWN SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN WILL HAVE TO EXAMINE THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY CAN BEST UTILIZE OR COORDINATE THEIR ACTIONS REGARDING NUCLEAR ARMS. THIS, HE ACKNOWLEDGES, IS ONE OF THE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A

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9. ARMS CONTROL: EARLY IN THE CAMPAIGN, GISCARD SAID HE WOULD NOT CHANGE THE PRESENT FRENCH POLICY ON THE CCD AND MBFR. MORE RECENTLY, HOWEVER, HE SAID THE FRENCH MUST PURSUE DETENTE, COOPERATION AND DISARMAMENT. IT MUST CONTRIBUTE TO THE RELAXATION OF WORLD TENSIONS. WHEREVER THERE IS A REAL CHANCE THAT SUCH RELAXATION CAN BE ACHIEVED, FRANCE MUST PARTICIPATE, HE ADDED. HE CAST HIS REMARKS WITHIN A FRAMEWORK OF TWO TYPES OF INITIATIVES HE FORESEES FOR FUTURE FRENCH FOREIGN POLICY (THE OTHER TYPE PERTAINING TO INITIATIVES TOWARD EUROPEAN UNION). HIS VAGUE LANGUAGE LEAVES HIM FLEXIBILITY AMONG THREE GENERAL OPTIONS: TO MAINTAIN FRANCE'S NON-PARTICIPATION IN THE CCD AND MBFR (ON THE BASIS THAT NEITHER AREN ARENA OFFERS REAL HOPE OF RELAXING TENSIONS); TO JOIN SELECTIVELY THOSE ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS THAT HE BELIEVES WILL FURTHER THE CAUSE OF DETENTE; OR PERHAPS TO LAUNCH A FRENCH INITIATIVE. IN ANY EVENT, HIS FREEDOM OF MANEUVER, HERE AS ELSEWHERE, IS LIKELY TO BE CONSTRAINED, AT LEAST FOR A WHILE, BY HIS DEPENDENCE ON UDR PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE THIS IS AN AREA THAT BEARS CLOSE WATCHING FOR POSSIBLE SIGNS OF EVOLUTION IN GOF POLICY.

10. COMMENT: THE ABOVE ANALYSIS IS BASED PRIMARILY ON CAMPAIGN STATEMENTS AND SHOULD BE VIEWED IN THAT LIGHT. GISCARD'S ABILITY TO BRING "CHANGE WITHOUT RISK" TO DEFENSE POLICY WILL DEPEND IN LARGE MEASURE ON HIS ABILITY TO ASSERT CONTROL OVER THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY. SOME OF THE MORE UNRECONSTRUCTED GAULLISTS (E.G., DEBRE) MIGHT CONCLUDE THAT CHANGES IN DEFENSE

AFFAIRS INVOLVE SUBSTANTIAL RISK AND WOULD RESIST THEM.
AS OF THE PRESENT, GISCARD HAS NOT INDICATED HOW HE
WILL DEAL WITH THAT SITUATION IF IT ARISES. ON BALANCE,
WE SUSPECT THAT HE WILL TEMPER ANY INCLINATIONS TOWARD
CHANGES THAT WOULD PUT HIM ON A COLLISION COURSE WITH
THE TRADITIONAL GAULLISTS. GAULLISTS OF THE DEBRE TYPE,
HOWEVER, ARE NOT LIKELY TO OCCUPY THE MORE INFLUENTIAL
POSITIONS IN GISCARD'S NEW GOVERNMENT -- WHICH HE WILL
ANNOUNCE EARLY NEXT WEEK. WE WILL HAVE A BETTER IDEA
OF GISCARD'S TACTICS (AND CHANGES, IF ANY) IN DEFENSE
AFFAIRS ONCE HE HAS NAMED A GOVERNMENT AND TAKEN A
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PUBLIC STANCE ON DEFENSE MATTERS AS PRESIDENT OF FRANCE,
RATHER THAN AS A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE SEEKING TO WIN
AN ELECTION.
IRWIN

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